



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/722,267	11/25/2003	Paul Joseph O'Dea	137991 (553-1063US)	8624
45436	7590	02/11/2011		
DEAN D. SMALL			EXAMINER	
THE SMALL PATENT LAW GROUP LLP			COBANOGLU, DILEK B	
225 S. MERAMEC, STE. 725T				
ST. LOUIS, MO 63105			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3626	
NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE			
02/11/2011	ELECTRONIC			

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

Docket@splglaw.com

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/722,267	Applicant(s) O'DEA ET AL.
	Examiner DILEK B. COBANOGLU	Art Unit 3626

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 December 2010.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1 and 4-25 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1 and 4-25 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsman's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-446)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Notice to Applicant

1. This communication is in response to the amendment received on 12/03/2010.

Claims 1, 4-25 remain pending in this application.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1, 4-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McMorrow et al. (hereinafter McMorrow) (U.S. Patent No. 6,569,097 B1) in view of Kim et al. (hereinafter Kim) (U.S. Patent No. 5,492,125).

A. Claim 1 has been amended now to recite a method for managing ultrasound examination information, the method comprising:

- i. determining a completion of at least one ultrasound scan performed during an ultrasound examination (McMorrow; col. 3, lines 1-45, col. 5, line 51 to col. 6, line 3, col. 7, lines 27-40);
- ii. providing immediately to a billing server electronic notification of completion of the at least one ultrasound scan (McMorrow; col. 3, lines 1-45, col. 5, line 51 to col. 6, line 3, col. 7, lines 27-40, col. 9, lines 6-52) with a completion signal upon determining the completion of the at least one ultrasound scan; and

iii. generating at least one output based upon the electronic notification (McMorrow; col. 9, lines 6-52), where the output comprises one or more billing statements that are automatically generated (McMorrow; col. 9, lines 6-52, figure 5, items 92-94).

McMorrow fails to expressly teach “a completion signal upon determining the completion of the at least one ultrasound scan”, per se, since it appears that McMorrow is more directed to “...After the results are made available to the user, both the identification number of the examination and the ID of the particular electronic instrument used are sent to the customer relationship management (CRM) accounting server, as shown at block 92.” However, this feature is well known in the art, as evidenced by Kim.

In particular, Kim discloses a completion signal (Kim; col. 8, lines 44-46 and in claims).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include the aforementioned limitation as disclosed by Kim with the motivation of to retrieve the frame for processing (Kim; col. 8, lines 44-46).

B. As per claim 4, McMorrow teaches a method in accordance with claim 2 wherein the generating is provided automatically upon the completion of the at least one scan (McMorrow; col. 9, lines 6-52).

C. As per claim 5, McMorrow teaches a method in accordance with claim 1 wherein at least one of the ultrasound scans comprises an unscheduled scan (McMorrow; col. 3, lines 1-45).

D. As per claim 6, McMorrow teaches a method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the electronic notification is provided automatically upon completion of a scan (McMorrow; col. 5, line 51 to col. 6, line 3).

E. As per claim 7, McMorrow teaches a method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the electronic notification is provided based upon a user input (McMorrow; col. 5, line 51 to col. 6, line 3).

F. As per claim 8, McMorrow teaches a method in accordance with claim 1 further comprising associating completed ultrasound scans with patient information (McMorrow; col. 7, lines 27-40).

G. As per claim 9, McMorrow teaches a method in accordance with claim 1 further comprising communicating the completion signal to a remote system and wherein ultrasound data from the ultrasound scan is not communicated to the remote system (McMorrow; col. 9, lines 6-52). McMorrow teaches "After the results are made available to the user, both the identification number of the examination and the ID of the particular electronic instrument used are sent to the customer relationship management (CRM) accounting server, as shown at block 92. The CRM server then creates a billing..." in col. 9, lines 28-37.

The obviousness of modifying the teaching of McMorrow to include communicating the completion signal to a remote system (as taught by

Kim) is as addressed above in the rejection of claim 1 and incorporated herein.

H. As per claim 10, McMorrow teaches a method in accordance with claim 1 wherein at least one of the ultrasound scans is scheduled and further comprising obtaining ultrasound examination information relating to the at least one scheduled ultrasound scan (McMorrow; col. 3, lines 1-45).

I. As per claim 11, McMorrow teaches a method in accordance with claim 10 further comprising searching a patient database for the ultrasound examination information (McMorrow; col. 3, lines 1-45).

J. As per claim 12, McMorrow teaches a method in accordance with claim 1 wherein at least one of the ultrasound scans is unscheduled and further comprising updating ultrasound examination information relating to the at least one unscheduled ultrasound scan (McMorrow; col. 3, lines 1-45).

K. As per claim 13, McMorrow teaches a method in accordance with claim 1 further comprising immediately generating an output at a remote system (McMorrow; col. 9, lines 49-52) upon receiving the completion signal. McMorrow teaches "...the billing is automatically tallied and provided both to the user and/or to the insurance company, as appropriate." In col. 9, lines 49-52.

The obviousness of modifying the teaching of McMorrow to include a completion signal (as taught by Kim) is as addressed above in the rejection of claim 1 and incorporated herein.

L. Claim 14 has been amended now to recite a method for managing ultrasound examination information, the method comprising:

- i. searching a database for ultrasound examination information based upon a user input, the ultrasound examination information relating to one or more ultrasound scans to be performed during an ultrasound examination (McMorrow; col. 3, lines 1-45); and
- ii. generating an output based upon (i) a notification of an update or change to a scheduled ultrasound scan to be performed as part of the one or more ultrasound scans and (ii) a received completion signal that at least one of the one or more ultrasound scans is complete, the output being a billing statement corresponding to the ultrasound examination information and the update or change notification such that billing for the ultrasound scans and update or change are separately identified, and provided remote from an ultrasound system used to perform the ultrasound examination (McMorrow; col. 3, lines 2-45, col. 4, lines 48-67, col. 5, line 34 to col. 6, line 31, col. 9, lines 6-52).

The obviousness of modifying the teaching of McMorrow to include communicating a completion signal to a remote system (as taught by Kim) is as addressed above in the rejection of claim 1 and incorporated herein.

M. As per claim 15, McMorrow teaches a method in accordance with claim 14 wherein the output comprises at least one billing statement (McMorrow; col. 9, lines 6-52).

N. As per claim 16, McMorrow teaches a method in accordance with claim 14 wherein a separate output is generated in connection with each electronic notification (McMorrow; col. 5, line 34 to col. 6, line 31).

O. As per claim 17, McMorrow teaches a method in accordance with claim 14 further comprising configuring the output based upon predefined criteria (McMorrow; col. 5, line 34 to col. 6, line 31).

P. As per claim 18, McMorrow teaches a method in accordance with claim 14 wherein the electronic notification is generated based upon a user input (McMorrow; col. 5, line 34 to col. 6, line 31).

Q. As per claim 19, McMorrow teaches a method in accordance with claim 14 wherein the electronic notification is automatically generated upon completion of an ultrasound scan (McMorrow; col. 5, line 34 to col. 6, line 31, col. 7, lines 27-40).

R. As per claim 20, McMorrow teaches a method in accordance with claim 14 wherein the completion signal is received by an administrative system and further comprising immediately generating a billing statement from the administrative system upon receiving the completion signal.

McMorrow teaches "After the results are made available to the user, both the identification number of the examination and the ID of the particular electronic instrument used are sent to the customer relationship management (CRM) accounting server,...the billing is automatically tallied

and provided both to the user and/or to the insurance company, as appropriate." In col. 9, lines 28-52.

The obviousness of modifying the teaching of McMorrow to include a completion signal (as taught by Kim) is as addressed above in the rejection of claim 1 and incorporated herein.

S. Claim 21 has been amended now to recite a user interface for an ultrasound system comprising:

- i. a control portion for controlling operation of an ultrasound system (McMorrow; col. 3, lines 1-45, col. 5, line 34 to col. 6, line 31); and
- ii. a menu portion for receiving a user input indicating the completion of at least one ultrasound scan, a completion signal transmitted immediately to a remote billing system based upon the user input and used by the remote billing system for generating a billing statement related to the completed ultrasound scan (McMorrow; col. 3, lines 1-45, col. 5, line 34 to col. 6, line 31, col. 8, lines 25-36).

The obviousness of modifying the teaching of McMorrow to include a transmitting a completion signal (as taught by Kim) is as addressed above in the rejection of claim 1 and incorporated herein.

T. As per claim 22, McMorrow teaches a user interface in accordance with claim 21 wherein the menu portion is configured to allow for selection of a plurality of user screens, at least one of the screens providing fields for searching the ultrasound examination information (McMorrow; col. 7, lines 7-20).

U. As per claim 23, McMorrow teaches a method in accordance with claim 1 further comprising providing electronic notification of at least one of an update and change to the at least one ultrasound scan (McMorrow; col. 8, lines 38-51).

V. As per newly added claim 25, McMorrow teaches a method in accordance with claim 14 wherein the output comprises at least one of a hospital report, a patient scheduling list, a technician scheduling list or a technician time sheet (McMorrow; col. 25-36).

4. Claim 24 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McMorrow et al. (hereinafter McMorrow) (U.S. Patent No. 6,569,097 B1) in view of Applicant's Admitted Art.

A. Claim 24 recites a method in accordance with claim 1 further comprising providing electronic notification after an expiration of a predetermined time period for the at least one ultrasound scan.

As stated in office action mailed on 09/03/2010, the following assertions of fact have gone unchallenged and are considered admitted prior art: provide a notification when a predetermined time period expires for a certain work

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed 12/03/2010 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant's arguments will be addressed below in the order in which they appear.

A. In response to Applicant's argument about McMorrow does not teach "providing immediately to a billing server electronic notification of completion of

the at least one ultrasound scan"; Examiner respectfully submits that McMorrow teaches "After the results are made available to the user, both the identification number of the examination and the ID of the particular electronic instrument used are sent to the customer relationship management (CRM) accounting server (or billing server),...the billing is automatically tallied and provided both to the user and/or to the insurance company, as appropriate." In col. 9, lines 28-52.

B. In response to Applicant's argument about McMorrow does not teach "separate identification on the billing statement" or "update or change notification such that billing for the ultrasound scans and update or change are separately identified"; Examiner respectfully submits that McMorrow teaches "...developing appropriate billing for the patient's insurance provider, saving time and expense for the insurer" in col. 9, lines 6-8, and "...the billing is automatically tallied and provided both to the user and/or to the insurance company, as appropriate." in col. 9, lines 28-52. Moreover, Examiner considers a broad, yet reasonable interpretation of McMorrow to also teach Applicant's recitation of separate identification on the billing statement, since McMorrow teaches billing is provided to the insurance company as well as providing a statement for payment to the user (McMorrow; col. 9, lines 6-52)

Conclusion

6. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

7. A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to DILEK B. COBANOGLU whose telephone number is (571)272-8295. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-4:30.

9. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert Morgan can be reached on 571-272-6773. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

10. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a

USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Dilek B Cobanoglu/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3626